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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRASILIA 000362

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/BSC AND AF

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SUBJECT: BRAZIL'S RELATIONS WITH AFRICA -- SELECTIVE
PRIORITIES

REF: A. 08 BRASILIA 64

[1](#)B. 08 BRASILIA 1435

Classified By: DCM Lisa Kubiske. Reason 1.5(d)

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. Reftel reported on Brazil's interest in Africa both as a matter of ethnic and cultural ties and of the policy of the Lula government to seek more global influence by cultivating other developing countries, the so called south-south policy. One year later, Africa retains its status as a priority area for Brazilian engagement, but Brazilian relations with the continent continue to be characterized more by political rhetoric than by projects on the ground. Although Brazil's involvement with Portuguese speaking countries has increased, resources for assistance remain severely limited. Brazil continues to court African support for a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) seat and has focused on possibilities for providing training to African militaries with the aim of engendering peacekeeping capabilities. The recent crisis in Guinea Bissau provides a good example of the strengths and limitations of Brazil's approach to Africa as Brazil's concern over the killing of the President has not led to any concrete action but an acceptance of the situation with hopes that things will turn out for the best. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) When Minister for External Relations (MRE) Amorim delivers his standard speech on Brazil's foreign policy priorities, Africa ranks behind only Brazil's neighbors as an area of interest. President Lula has made nine trips to Africa and has supported the opening of seventeen new diplomatic posts on the continent. Reftel provides details on the basis for Brazil's interest in Africa, an interest that continues as Brazil views Africa as an area in which it can gain global influence at a relatively low cost. During the first week in March, Brazilian Ambassadors to African countries were summoned to Brasilia for a conference including three hours with President Lula. The MRE cites this conference as evidence of Africa's continued importance, but in briefing on it noted that there has been no new foreign assistance designated in this year's budget. Similarly, the MRE Division for the UN named Africa as an area in which Brazil wanted more UN engagement, especially on peace building, but Brazil has not been able to contribute more than a handful of personnel to UN efforts. Brazil's foreign assistance agency (Agencia Brasileira de Cooperacao - ABC) devotes approximately half of its worldwide budget of twenty two million dollars to Africa. The largest share of this money goes to Cape Verde for public health and

agriculture development. Guinea Bissau and other Portuguese speaking countries get the lion's share of the rest, leaving almost no resources for most of Africa. President Lula has, however, assured Brazilian embassies in Africa that they alone will be spared in upcoming budget cuts facing MRE posts abroad.

¶3. (C) One reason for Brazil's interest in Africa is the Brazilian quest for a permanent seat on the UNSC, described by Minister Amorim as Brazil's highest foreign policy priority. According to MRE UN Director Gilda Neves, Brazil will support the African Group's call for African Security Council seats to gain the backing of African members states for Brazil's aspirations. Brazil is also counting on its widespread diplomatic presence in Africa to maintain support among African countries and will make the argument that as a permanent member Brazil will be a champion for all developing states, particularly Africa.

¶4. (C) Security cooperation with Africa is among the more promising avenues for Brazilian involvement. Although Brazil lacks formal security assistance programs, it has been able to offer what MRE Africa Director Luciano Macieira terms "capacity building" through the training of African officers at Brazilian military schools. Currently, there are around forty Africans studying in Brazil. Recently, Brazil has discussed embedding a Mozambique contingent in its peacekeeping forces in Haiti in order to enhance Mozambique's capacity to take on peacekeeping missions in Africa. This concept is being developed in consultation with the UK government, and, according to the UK embassy in Brasilia

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could lead to greater Brazilian involvement in peacekeeping in Africa. The Brazilian MRE and military, however, have made it clear that they are not currently interested in deployments to Africa but in working with African militaries to handle peacekeeping duties on their own. The concept will be further discussed during Defense Minister Jobim's visit to Maputo in late March.

¶5. (C) Brazil also provides a limited amount of training to Portuguese speaking police in counter-narcotics. In 2008, this consisted of the training of approximately sixty police, including forty agents of the Guinea Bissau police by the Brazilian federal police. The Federal Police would like to make Africa a high priority and have told Embassy DEA reps that the majority of Brazil's drug exports go via Africa. Again, resources limit what Brazil can do about drug trafficking via Africa as does the Brazilian leadership's tendency to present Africa in a favorable light. When poloff asked Africa Director Macieira about Brazilian policy concerning the transit of drugs to Africa, he quickly changed the subject to Brazilian training of African military officers. The Federal Police proposed stationing three police attaches in Brazilian Embassies on Africa to improve counter narcotics cooperation, but this initiative was blocked by the MRE.

¶5. (C) The recent killings of the President and Head of the Armed Forces of Guinea Bissau provide the best example of Brazil's approach to Africa and its limitations. Initially, Brazil joined with Portugal and neighboring countries to call for calm in the wake of the killings of the President and Army Chief and to convene a meeting of Portuguese speaking countries in Lisbon to offer assistance. As of March 10, the MRE had backed away from this idea, saying that the situation had quieted down. Because President Vieira and General Waia were political rivals, the MRE believes their deaths may ease tensions in Guinea Bissau and allow economic development to proceed. Macieira, however, contradicted this idea by saying that he believed drug traffickers had a hand in the killings (based on the sophisticated explosives used) and that Guinea Bissau was increasingly falling under the influence of criminals. Although the MRE acknowledges that Guinea Bissau faces serious political and economic challenges, Brazil lacks

the resources to provide additional assistance, which may explain why Brazil is officially portraying the situation there in a relatively positive light.

16. (C) COMMENT. It would be overly cynical to believe that Brazil is only interested in Africa as a means of bolstering its world power credentials. Certainly, engagement with Africa serves this purpose and allows a great bang for the Real under a severely limited foreign assistance budget than elsewhere. As noted in ref b, Brazil continues to place high importance on the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBAS) relationship and will make continuing this dialogue a priority. It is true, however, that Brazilian leaders, especially President Lula believe that Brazil's examples of poverty alleviation and sustainable development can apply to Africa. It is in this realm that potential for cooperation with the U.S. exists, particularly in such areas as improving public health, sustainable agriculture and expanding possibilities for ethanol production. The potential training and deployment of Mozambique peacekeepers may provide an avenue for cooperation and is an initiative the U.S. should seek to encourage within available resources.
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